

CLAIMS

1. An ink formulation comprising a marking component and a metal salt that absorbs laser irradiation at 700-2000 nm and thereby causes the marking component to change colour.
- 5 2. A formulation according to claim 1, wherein the metal is a transition metal.
3. A formulation according to claim 2, wherein the metal is copper.
4. A formulation according to any preceding claim, wherein the salt is a poly-metal salt.
5. A formulation according to any preceding claim, which additionally comprises
- 10 a compound including an oxymetal anion.
6. A formulation according to any preceding claim, which additionally comprises a colour-forming compound.
7. A formulation according to any preceding claim, which additionally comprises a binder.
- 15 8. A formulation according to any preceding claim, which is water-based.
9. A formulation according to any preceding claims, which comprises an organic solvent.
10. A method for forming an image on a substrate, which comprises applying onto the substrate a formulation according to any preceding claim, and irradiating it with a
- 20 laser.
11. A method according to claim 10, wherein the laser is a diode or CO₂ laser.